

## Caper Tigers top Ocean City in boys basketball

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## House of the week

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167th YEAR NO. 5 CAPE MAY, N.J. Serving America's National Historic Landmark City WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2021 \$1.00

# DEP taking long view of climate change

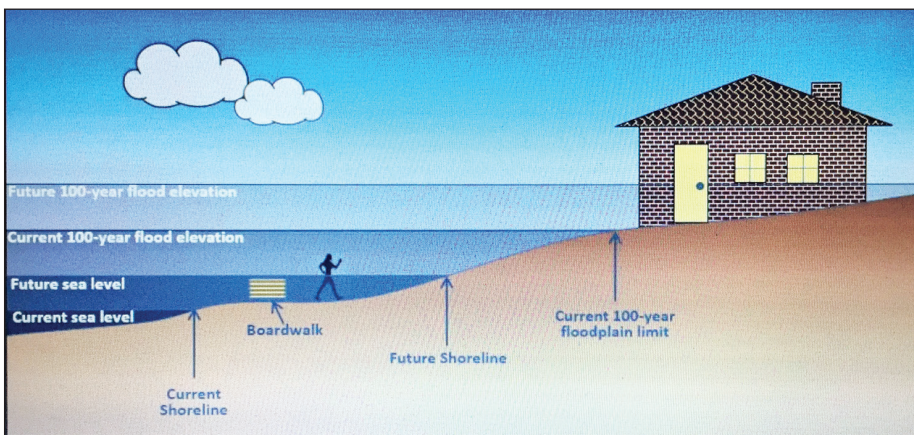
## Anticipating 5-foot sea level rise by 2100

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

The state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is proposing new regulations to address climate change that anticipates sea level rise by as much as 5 feet by the year 2100. The Cape May County Chamber of Commerce presented a Zoom program covering potential amendments to land resource protection rules by the

DEP to address climate change. Vince Mazzei, assistant commissioner for watershed and land management, who oversees the DEP's new divisions of Land Resource Protection and Restoration, presented the program to an online audience Jan. 25. He has a leading role in New Jersey PACT (Protecting Against Climate Threats), a targeted regulatory reform initiative aimed at modernizing many of the state's environmental regulations to protect against climate threats. "We want people to be safe. We want economic growth to be responsible and to not be inhibited where it shouldn't be, and this is a difficult challenge that we're facing," he said. "We have science that suggests some pretty scary things on our horizon and how best do we adapt

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Benita Battaglia/Special to the STAR AND WAVE

## Surfing in a winter wonderland

A couple of surfers ignored the light snow that fell Sunday on the beach in front of the Inn of Cape May and the freezing cold to catch some waves.

# City survives difficult year in good shape

## Trimmed expenses, increased surplus amid 2020 pandemic

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — While revenue dropped in 2020, the city increased its surplus funds by cutting spending across the board.

During a virtual City Council meeting Jan. 19, Chief Financial Officer Neil Young said Cape May received \$213,000 less in occupancy tax than 2019, mainly due to many hotels being closed in the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"However, we did receive an excess of what we anticipated," he said. "We are very conservative in our revenue estimates."

The city received \$24,000 more occupancy tax than predicted for 2020, Young said.

The city sold 19,000 pre-season beach tags in December exceeding, the number of tags sold in 2019. The 2020 budget anticipated \$2.4 million in beach tag revenue. As of Nov. 30, 2020, prior to the December pre-season sale,

the city had sold \$2.1 million of beach tags. The Beach Utility started 2020 with a \$1.5 million surplus account and ended the year at \$1.75 million, an increase of \$248,000.

He said parking meter revenue was \$185,000 less than 2019 but the line item ended with more revenue than anticipated in the budget. Parking meter rates were raised in August.

Construction fees were down but the city received \$145,000 more than anticipated in 2020, Young said. Large projects took place in the prior two years, the remodeling of Victorian Towers in 2018 and an addition to LeMar Hotel in 2019, he said.

The city received \$1.2 million more than anticipated in local purpose tax in 2020. Young said the city forecast a 95.8 percent collection rate but received more than 99 percent.

The city anticipated \$6.4 million in water and sewer

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## Cape May Point projects 2-cent increase in tax rate

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY POINT — In its current state, the borough's 2021 municipal budget features a 2-cent increase in the local purpose tax rate.

During a virtual Borough Commission meeting Jan. 26, Chief Financial Officer James Craft said he anticipated a 2-cent increase and a likely increase to water/sewer rates.

Deputy Mayor Anita van Heeswyk said each commissioner should revisit the budget to see what could be cut.

"I think the 2-cent increase is a lot, so if we can cut something out that we

may think is more of a wish item than something that we need ...," she said.

The borough's interlocal agreement with Cape May for police services totals \$311,822.

Craft said the borough has \$174,000 in the capital improvement funds that is not earmarked for a particular project.

The borough's water and sewer budget is up \$22,877. The spending plan would use \$94,718 to balance the budget, which is down \$12,123 from the prior year, leaving a surplus of about \$20,948.

Commissioner Catherine Busch said a rate increase

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# Number of new COVID cases declining

By DAVID NAHAN  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY COURT HOUSE — The number of new cases of COVID-19 has been slowly declining in Cape May County, according to the Department of Health, which also reports 11,391 doses of the vaccine had been administered as of Monday, Feb. 1.

The doses include those administered at the county site and other entities, such as Cape Regional Medical Center, urgent cares and pharmacies.

To get information on how, where and when to get a vaccine, and who is eligible, the department advises going online to capemaycountynj.gov.

The department also noted the rate of transmission of the virus is now at 0.94, meaning less than one new person is infected for everyone contracting the virus.

The county is closing in on 6,000 cases since the pandemic began, still among the lowest in the state. Warren and Salem counties are also among the lowest while northern New Jersey counties closest to New York City are among the highest.

The number of active cases in the municipalities dropped below 500 Monday to 455.

Lower Township reported the most active cases with 95, followed by Upper Township with 77, Middle Township with

73 and Ocean City with 65. Middle Township reported 11 new cases Monday, Upper Township had nine, Lower Township had eight and Ocean City had six.

Other active cases as of Monday included Wildwood (38), Dennis Township (25), Wildwood Crest (22), North Wildwood (17), Woodbine (10), Sea Isle City and Cape May (8 each), West Cape May (7), Avalon (5), Stone Harbor (4) and West Wildwood (1).

There have been 72 fatalities in the communities since the pandemic began, including 18 in Lower Township, 15 in Middle Township, seven in Ocean City, six in Upper Township, five each in Wild-

wood and Woodbine, four in Dennis Township, three each in Cape May, North Wildwood and Wildwood Crest, and one in West Cape May.

There have been no fatalities in Avalon, Cape May Point, Stone Harbor and West Wildwood.

As of Monday, there were 16 active cases in long-term care, including six each in Woodbine and Middle Township and four in Ocean City.

There have been 91 deaths in long-term care facilities, including 33 in Lower Township, 19 in Dennis Township, 15 in Middle Township, 13 in Ocean City and 11 in Woodbine.

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## Free Lung Cancer Screening · Saturday, February 27

Shore Medical Center, a proud member of the Penn Cancer Network, Advanced Shore Imaging Associates, and ScreenNJ are hosting a

**LUNG CANCER SCREENING EVENT · Saturday, February 27 · 9 am - 12 noon · Shore Cancer Center**

Consultations provided by Dr. Charles Roche of Shore Physicians Group.

**IF YOU ARE: 55 to 80 years of age; and a current smoker or have quit smoking in the past 15 year** a Low Dose CT screening may be right for you.

**Call for more information and/or schedule an appointment at 609-653-3484.**

Lung cancer is the number one cause of cancer deaths. Low Dose CT screenings can detect lung cancer early when it is the most treatable. Early detection saves lives. Call today.

